



**SCOUTS CANADA
BCY OPERATIONS CENTRE**

Serving Cascadia, Fraser Valley and Pacific Coast Councils
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TO: All Scouters in BC - Yukon

FROM: **Dave Mitchell, Cascadia Council Commissioner**
Jim Bryce, Fraser Valley Council Commissioner
John Chow, Pacific Coast Council Commissioner

SUBJECT: Media coverage regarding former Scout Leader charged with a Sexual Offence

DATE: January 4, 2008

As you may be aware, a former Scout Leader from the BC area has been charged by police with a child related offence dating back to the 1990's. Initial charges were laid in July 2007 and the media covered the story. Recently, new charges have been approved against the individual and news coverage regarding the charges has once again been included in the local media.

Due to the renewed media coverage surrounding the charges, you may receive questions from parents. The following is information to assist you in answering any questions or concerns that parents may have.

Protecting all of our members from harm is Scouts Canada's number one priority, and is thoroughly detailed in our Duty of Care document. Our procedures for screening and accepting new leaders are very strict. The vast majority of our leaders are Moms and Dads, and other young adults interested in Scouting. Many of our young adult leaders developed their leadership through Scouting as a youth. Regardless of their background, we work very hard to select leaders who have only the best interests of the youth in their care at heart.

Screening Procedures

Scouts Canada's screening procedures are among the most stringent in Canada. In fact, we have been used as a model for other organizations that wish to update their screening procedures. Our initial screening for potential volunteers consists of several parts:

1. Written application for membership.
2. Selection interview with at least two experienced interviewers who look for any "red flag" items such as an excessive interest in youth.
3. Three personal references which are contacted by interviewers.
4. A clean Police Record Check – volunteers and staff must supply a clean PRC every three years.
5. The Commissioner signs off on the applicant as final approval that all steps in the screening procedure have been properly completed.

Two Deep Leadership Policy

Scouts Canada's policy of "two-deep leadership" means that at no time may a leader be alone with a youth or group of youth. There must always be two adult, fully screened and registered leaders present at all times with any number of youth. Leaders are counseled to adhere strictly to this policy.

Documents of interest:

Duty of Care

Scouts Canada provides a "Duty of Care" document which is required reading for all leaders. It outlines the proper code of conduct for adults as well as the duty to youth, parents and self. It can be found on the national website as part of the Bylaw, Policies and Procedures document (section 7000):

<http://sunshine.scouts.ca/bpp/Section%207000%2005.pdf>

Child abuse: a Guide for Scouters

<http://www.scouts.ca/inside.asp?cmPageID=418>

Protecting Your Child (for parents)

<http://www.scouts.ca/inside.asp?cmPageID=107>

Your local council officials and the national office Communications team are also available to answer any concerns you or your parents may have.

If you happen to receive any calls or questions from the media, please direct them to contact Heidi Vincent or Susie Mackie in the National Office.

Local Contact Information: Viki Fanous, Council Field Executive 604-220-8381

National Office

Heidi Vincent, Director of Communications 613 - 224-5131 ext. 271

Susie Mackie, Internal Communications Specialist 613-224-5131 ext. 259

Thank you!